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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 19 October 2000, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

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00-69882 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 83: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/55/20, A/55/153; A/C.4/55/L.8)

1. **Ms. Filipenko** (Ukraine) said that based on its 50 years of experience in space research, her country had considerable industrial potential in space technology. Ukraine sought to adapt its space system to international standards of reliability and competitiveness and was currently involved in implementing its 1998-2000 space programme, which was aimed, *inter alia*, at strengthening international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. To that end, it had participated in several international projects over the past few years, including the SeaLaunch programme under which satellites were placed in geosynchronous orbit. The consortium was working to increase the system's payload capacity by the end of 2002. Ukraine was contributing to the project with its Zenith 3 SL booster, which had already carried out three launches.

2. Ukraine was participating actively in the development of regional cooperation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. At the Silk Road Cooperation Summit, held in New York on 8 September 2000, Ukraine had expressed its desire to make a real contribution to the SilkSat project for the development of a regional satellite telecommunication system to enable countries in the Europe-Caucasus-Asia transport corridor to benefit fully from the latest know-how in the information field.

3. Ukraine advocated the strengthening of the role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) with a view to ensuring that outer space continued to be used for peaceful purposes.

4. **Mr. Islam** (Pakistan) said that his country hoped that the recommendations made by the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), a historic event that had helped to promote international cooperation in matters relating to outer space, would be implemented appropriately so as to achieve the established objectives. The spin-off benefits of space technology offered numerous and substantial advantages which must be made available to all Member States, including the developing countries that lacked the necessary resources to make use of such benefits. The international community therefore had a responsibility to further such spin-off benefits through cooperation.

5. Pakistan believed that in years to come the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee should devote special attention to the following issues: matters relating to remote sensing, use of nuclear power sources in outer space, means of and mechanisms for strengthening inter-agency cooperation and increasing the use of space applications and services within and among entities of the United Nations system, implementation of an integrated, space-based global natural disaster management system and the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and of its utilization and applications.

6. The Legal Subcommittee should pursue the following specific topics: its review of the status and implementation of the international legal instruments governing outer space, information on the activities of international organizations relating to space law, matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space and review and possible revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space.

7. Pakistan was not convinced of the desirability of drafting a universal comprehensive convention on international space law on the basis of the various existing instruments if there was no pre-existing consensus on them. It was committed to attaining the objectives set out in the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development and, in accordance with a decision of the General Assembly, had celebrated World Space Week in 2000 with a view to heightening public awareness of the contributions that could be made by national and international activities in space science and technology to the country's socio-economic development.

8. There was still a disturbing danger that outer space might become a theatre for military rivalry, and it was therefore essential to elaborate a universal convention to prohibit an arms race. In the meantime, efforts must be bent towards the implementation of existing agreements on the peaceful uses of the products of space science and technology.

9. Pakistan supported the request made by Saudi Arabia and other interested Member States concerning the membership of COPUOS.

10. **Mr. Haggag** (Egypt) said that the establishment of COPUOS 40 years ago had been a historic event, as the Committee was the only body of the General Assembly concerned with strengthening international cooperation in the various fields of peaceful uses of outer space. Apart from its work in the technical, scientific and legal fields to ensure that the peaceful uses of outer space benefited all countries, the Committee was responsible for five international treaties on outer space.

11. Egypt hoped that the Vienna Declaration would be applied fully, in view of its importance in all development-related fields. In that connection, it welcomed the recommendations of the Working Group of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, particularly on the establishment of a mechanism to implement the strategy to address global challenges referred to in the Vienna Declaration. The Office for Outer Space Affairs should be provided with the necessary resources for that purpose to enable it to carry out the plan of action adopted by COPUOS. Egypt also hoped that at its fifty-ninth session in 2004, the General Assembly would review the implementation of the recommendations adopted at UNISPACE III, in accordance with paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 54/68. It urged all Member States to contribute to the Trust Fund for activities to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III. It further hoped that international cooperation in the elaboration of appropriate plans for limiting the dangers for future missions posed by space debris would be strengthened. In that regard, the review of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space, adopted by the General Assembly in 1992 in its resolution 47/68, should be the subject of a scientific and technical consensus with the participation of all Member States on an equal footing. Egypt supported the enlargement of the membership of COPUOS in order to give all countries that so desired the opportunity to contribute to the work and deliberations of that body.

12. At the national level, Egypt had established a Council on Space Science and Technology with the task of developing a national programme for the peaceful applications of space exploration to State-set technological and development objectives. It would continue to cooperate in that field with the United Nations and Member States and would take advantage of the various international frameworks and forums for the regulation of space exploration. Lastly, Egypt was pleased to be hosting the Second International Conference on Earth Observation and Environmental Information, to be convened in Cairo from 11 to 14 November 2000, and hoped that the outcome of that meeting would contribute to the realization of the common objectives established by Member States.

13. **Ms. Achouri** (Tunisia) said that her country was following with interest the work of COPUOS in view of the important role played by space technology in sustainable development and the Committee's important task, namely to ensure that space exploration benefited humanity. Tunisia hoped that the recommendations of UNISPACE III and the Vienna Declaration would bear fruit. In 1984 it had established a National Outer Space Commission and in 1987 it had set up a National Remote Sensing Centre.

14. Given that outer space was part of the common heritage of mankind, its exploitation must benefit all, particularly the developing countries. Despite the progress made in that direction, the gap between developed and developing countries remained large and was growing, in view of the rapid pace of technological advances. Tunisia was convinced that, through cooperation and solidarity, the international community could ensure that science and technology were placed at the service of mankind to put an end to ignorance, exclusion and environmental degradation in a context of sustainable development. The United Nations, and particularly COPUOS, had a key role to play in achieving that objective.

15. **Mr. Apunte** (Ecuador) said that space applications helped to mobilize a response to major regional and international problems such as environmental protection, management of natural resources, prevention of natural disasters and enhancement of communication infrastructure. In his view, space science and technology could underpin sustainable development and lasting economic growth, the fundamental principles underlying the recommendations in Agenda 21.

16. His delegation supported unreservedly the proposals contained in paragraph 46 of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) (A/55/153), since they would help to strengthen the role of COPUOS in the

field of sustainable development. Ecuador welcomed the fact that remote sensing technology had made it possible, *inter alia*, to mitigate the impact of El Niño and was currently working, with the assistance of the international community, on the establishment of an international centre for the study of that natural phenomenon on the basis of satellite data.

17. His delegation wished to emphasize the importance of intensifying international cooperation with a view to implementing the Vienna Declaration, which set out recommendations in the following areas: protecting the environment and managing natural resources, using space applications for human security, development and welfare, advancing scientific knowledge of space and protecting the space environment, enhancing education and training opportunities and ensuring public awareness of the importance of space activities.

18. Turning to the equitable distribution and utilization of the geostationary orbit, he said it was regrettable that it had taken over 20 years to forge a consensus which took into account the interests of the developing countries and of countries with a special geographical position. Ecuador, which had never failed to defend the rights of such countries, endorsed the principles that had been the subject of consensus, as set out in annex III to the report of the Legal Subcommittee on its thirty-ninth session (A/AC.105/738). With regard to outer space law, he said that in view of the technological progress made and the legal breakthroughs achieved in recent years, his delegation supported the proposal by the Russian Federation for the development of a single comprehensive international legal regime.

19. **Mr. Hafiana** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that, conscious of the importance of using space for peaceful purposes in all domains of life, particularly in combating desertification and promoting environmental protection, his country had established a national remote sensing and space sciences centre and was participating in the scientific and technical work of various specialized international bodies. While welcoming the results of UNISPACE III, his country called for the curtailment of military programmes in outer space and an end to the arms race in outer space so that the resources thus conserved could be used for development and to combat the illness, poverty, ignorance and underdevelopment that still afflicted a large portion of humanity.

20. The developed countries were called upon to help the developing countries gain unconditional and unrestricted access to space technology and to facilitate the activities of the international bodies that were working for the dissemination of space data. It was equally important to coordinate and harmonize the activities of COPUOS and those of the Commission on Disarmament. Lastly, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya wished to underscore the importance of establishing at the international level principles and rules for the exploration and utilization of outer space and wished to declare its support for the enlargement of the membership of the Committee in order to give all countries a chance to make an effective contribution.

21. **Mr. Cassapoglou**, speaking on behalf of his country and of the Steering Committee of the Network of Space Science and Technology Education and Research Institutions for Central Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, said he wished to thank the Office for Outer Space Affairs for the support it had provided for the Network's activities over the past year. He expressed condolences to the Russian Federation on the recent death of the cosmonaut Titov and congratulated the United States and other countries that had participated in the latest mission of the shuttle Discovery.

22. **Mr. Lee** (Republic of Korea) said that the responsibilities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should be expanded in future owing to the fact that space technology had increasingly greater repercussions in daily life. He was grateful to the Committee for the important role it played, both in the development of a legal regime for outer space and in cooperation among States. UNISPACE III had made it possible to examine the progress made in space science and technology and to pave the way for cooperation aimed at the use of space technology for peaceful purposes. The Republic of Korea would work to implement the Vienna Declaration to that end.

23. The Republic of Korea had launched its own space programme in 1990 and had since placed several satellites in orbit. In 1999 alone, it had launched a scientific satellite, a geostationary satellite and a multi-purpose satellite. The country's medium- and long-term space development plan called for the launching of 19 satellites between now and 2015.

24. Noting that the latest enlargement of the membership of COPUOS had taken place six years

ago, he said that the admission of new members with the will and capacity to contribute to the peaceful uses of outer space could only be beneficial. The Republic of Korea was anxious to become a full member of the Committee and welcomed the amendment to paragraph 39 of draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.8 which would, it hoped, be adopted without a vote.

25. **Mr. González** (Chile), Chairman of the Working Group of the Whole on International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses Of Outer Space, introducing draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.8, said that it addressed the work to be done by COPUOS and its subsidiary bodies in the upcoming year. The draft resolution was based on the corresponding text adopted the previous year, with some exceptions. Two preambular paragraphs had been added, one on the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III and the other on the importance of the use of space science and technology for economic, social and cultural development. The word *"Seriously"* should be inserted at the beginning of the fourth preambular paragraph.

26. The Legal Subcommittee had reached agreement on the question of the utilization of the geostationary orbit, an agreement reflected in paragraphs 4 and 7. Paragraph 26 related to a proposal submitted by Chile on behalf of the MERCOSUR countries and associated States. Paragraphs 27 to 33 concerned the follow-up to UNISPACE III, and in particular, the Committee's recommendations on that subject.

27. The results of the Working Group's discussions on the question of enlargement of the membership of the Committee were set out in paragraph 39, the text of which should be slightly revised to give more rigorous expression to what had been agreed. At the end of the paragraph, the word "include" should be replaced by the phrase "consider including". Paragraph 40 reflected the decision to include the issue of enlargement of membership in the agenda of the Committee's session in 2001. For his part, he intended to hold informal consultations in advance of the scheduled session, in order to move forward on an issue on which, in his opinion, there was already a broad consensus. He believed that it should be possible to resolve the question of enlargement of membership at the Committee's next session.

28. In conclusion, he suggested that in accordance with the established practice, draft resolution A/C.4/55/L.8 should be adopted without a vote.

29. **Mr. Dausa Cespedes** (Cuba) recalled that the Working Group had decided that the meeting mentioned in paragraph 18 would be organized with the participation of Member States. That aspect was not reflected in the text of the draft resolution and he requested that it should be revised accordingly. With regard to paragraph 39, he requested the insertion, at the end of the paragraph, of the word "full" before the word "members", so that the phrase would read "full members;". The reason for the insertion was that some countries shared seats on the Committee and without the insertion, the paragraph might be construed as referring solely to countries that were not yet members of the Committee but wished to join it.

30. **Mr. González** (Chile) supported the two proposals made by the Cuban delegation, which had indeed been discussed during the deliberations of the Working Group. The text of the draft resolution would be revised accordingly.

31. **Mr. Cassapoglou** (Greece) requested a number of editorial corrections to the text of the draft resolution. In the French language version of paragraph 24, the title of the Network should read: *"Réseau d'institutions d'enseignement et de recherche en science et technologie spatiales de l'Europe du Centre-Est et du Sud-Est"*. In paragraph 29, the word "above-mentioned" should be inserted before the phrase "plan of action", since the plan of action was mentioned in paragraph 28. In paragraph 43 of the French text, the latinism *"colloque"* should be replaced by the hellenism *"symposium"*, since a Greek initiative was being described. In the French text of the same paragraph, the words *"applications des sciences et des techniques spatiales"* should be replaced by the phrase *"applications de la science et de la technologie spatiales"*, a change that should also be made in paragraph 44.

32. **The Chairman** announced that the representative of Chile, who chaired the Working Group, endorsed the corrections proposed by the delegate of Greece. The draft resolution had financial implications which would be introduced at a later meeting, if there was no objection, as the relevant document was not yet available.

33. *It was so decided.*

34. **The Chairman** announced that the Committee had completed its general debate on agenda item 83.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.